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22 May 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 19 May 1987 HPSCI Briefing

CIA Briefers:

ADDI Helgersen

ADDO [REDACTED]

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Congressmen Present:

Stokes, [REDACTED] Lungren,
Kennelly, Kastenmeier, Dwyer,
McCurdy, McEwen, McHugh, and
Wilson

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Subjects Briefed:

Persian Gulf: USS Stark Incident
Angola: Update on the War
Nicaragua: Update on the War
Philippines: Election Update

Questions/Answers:

Stokes

QUESTION: Can you provide us an update on
Fiji?

ANSWER: The Washington Post article today
is too optimistic. The bottom line is that
the recent election was won by ethnic
Indians, ending a long period of native
Fijian control of the Government, and Rabuka
took over to reinstall Fijian rule. The
Governor General has since declared a state
of emergency and called for new elections.
Rabuka, however, doesn't appear prepared to
throw in the towel. Australia and New
Zealand are heavily involved with naval
vessels in the area, but they are not likely
to intervene.

Lungren

QUESTION: Did the Waddell know much in
advance about the approaching Iraqi plane?

ANSWER: I don't really know. The incident
on the 17th, however, was not unique. One

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plane followed a similar flight path on the 14th.

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Kennelly

No questions.

Kastenmeier

QUESTION: What did the Stark warning consist of?

ANSWER: The Stark would have warned the plane that it was coming into the Stark's airspace and should turn aside. I don't know exactly what the Stark Commander said in the warning.

QUESTION: The press indicates that the Captain may not have used all the options available to warn off the plane. Does Intelligence have any view on how well the Stark dealt with the plane?

ANSWER: It is hard to determine. The Stark did have seven to eight minutes to decide how to act. It does have radar and missiles and a gatling gun to protect it. Why these were not used is difficult to say; I don't know.

QUESTION: Do the Iraqis and Iranians have policies for attacking ships in Gulf.

ANSWER: Although a number of innocent ships have been hit, the two sides do have patterns of attack.

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Dwyer

QUESTION: What orders did the Captain of the Stark operate under?

ANSWER: I don't know. According to the press and the Pentagon's public statements, the Captain had authority to respond appropriately if hostile intent was indicated.

QUESTION: Has this authority been in effect for long or has it changed since our tilt toward Iraq?

ANSWER: It probably has been the same for some time. I don't believe our policy toward Iraq has changed Naval orders, although I am not an authority on this.

McHugh

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QUESTION: Assuming Israel attends an international peace conference, is Syria more willing now to attend such a meeting?

ANSWER: Syrians are trying to appear more willing, in part because of the pressure Western governments have put on them regarding their terrorist activities. But their fundamental position has not changed. ADDO. Since the El Al incident, Syria has taken a more peaceful line

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there still has been no fundamental change in their position.

Wilson.

QUESTION: Anything new on Afghanistan?

ANSWER: ADDO. With summer coming there has been a marked increase in convoys. As a result, fighting is likely to increase.

QUESTION: Have the number of Soviet troops increased?

ANSWER: I don't know that troop strength is up, but not much appears to have changed recently. I'll get back to you with specifics.

QUESTION: I understand the Soviets are losing one to two helicopters a day in Afghanistan.

ANSWER: ADDO. I haven't seen that, I don't believe so.

McEwen

No questions. Left early.

McCurdy

QUESTION: What do we know about how the Iranians and Iraqis make target selections? How do we know it?

ANSWER: I will have an analyst write a short paper for you on this.

QUESTION: It would be interesting to know if they use agents or what to help them pick targets.

ANSWER: The Iranians use helicopters, etc., that sight vessels coming into the Gulf.

QUESTION: Is a night attack unusual?

ANSWER: Yes, most are in daytime; but it is not unprecedented.

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QUESTION: I can't believe the attack on the Stark was accidental.

ANSWER: Since the attack was at night, given the size of Stark, etc., it leaves me with the impression that this was a monstrous accident, although I have no specific evidence to prove this.

Kennelly

QUESTION: Could the Navy have thought the plane was going to attack someone else?

ANSWER: The Navy monitors planes in the area and probably did not think it was going to attack the Stark.

McCurdy

QUESTION: How many US Navy vessels are in the Gulf?

ANSWER: I believe five.

QUESTION: What is their mission?

ANSWER: ADDO. I don't know precisely. The press indicates they provide support to Kuwaiti shipping.

QUESTION: Is there a danger of ship to ship attacks?

ANSWER: ADDO. Probably near the Straits of Hormuz.

ADDI. And in the north.

QUESTION: Is a frigate the right ship for this area?

ANSWER: I'm not a naval expert, I really don't know.

QUESTION: How long is the Gulf?

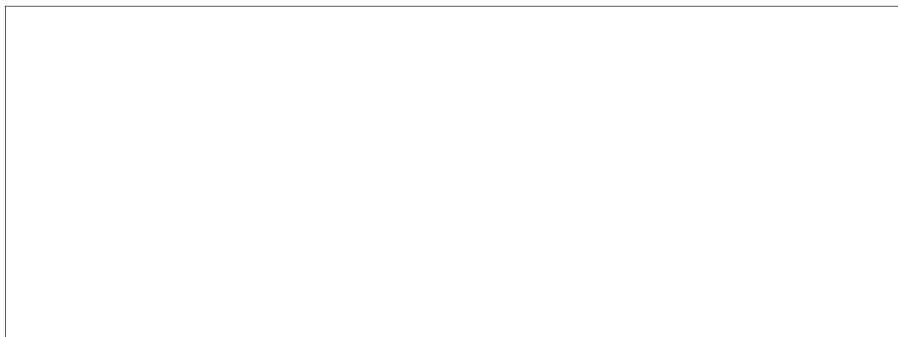
ANSWER: From Shaibah to the Stark was 360 miles one-way.

QUESTION: Do AWACs planes have direct contact with ships?

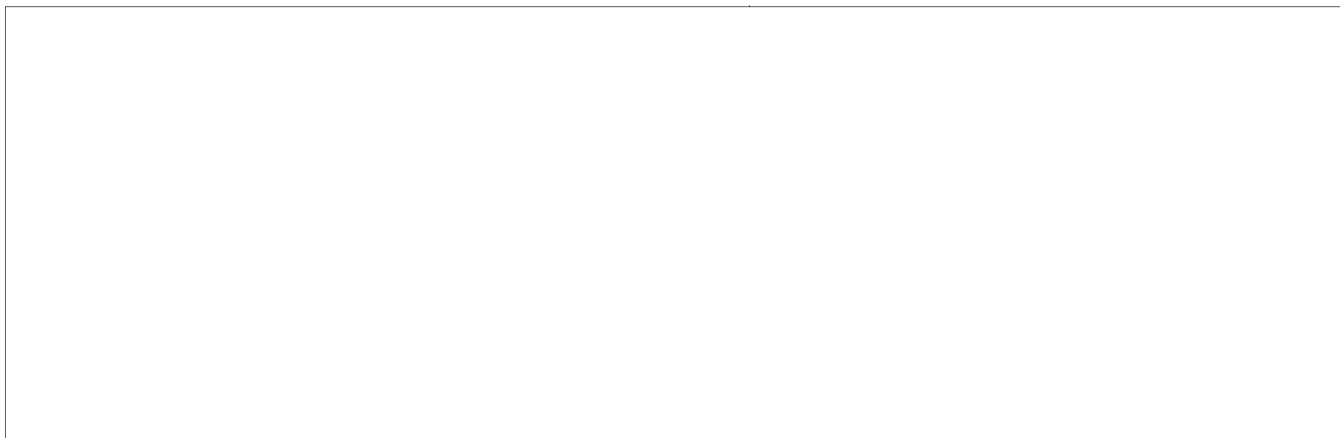
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ANSWER: I don't know what the interface is.



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